

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO AIR TOXICS STANDARDS FOR INTEGRATED IRON AND STEEL MANUFACTURING

ACTION

- On August 23, 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued proposed amendments to the current rule that reduces emissions of toxic air pollutants from integrated iron and steel manufacturing facilities. Toxic air pollutants, or air toxics, are known or suspected to cause cancer and other health problems.
- Integrated iron and steel manufacturing facilities convert iron ore to iron and refine the iron to produce steel. Air toxics standards for these facilities were established in 2003.
- The proposed amendments would revise the current emissions limit for sinter cooler stacks to apply to sinter coolers instead of sinter cooler stacks. A 10 percent opacity limit also is proposed for sinter coolers at an existing sinter plant instead of the current particulate matter (PM) emissions limit. The operating limit for an electrostatic precipitator would be changed to require that plants maintain the hourly average opacity of emissions from the control device at or below 10 percent.
- A new compliance option would allow plants to use a continuous opacity monitoring system (COMS) for each control device stack instead of a bag leak detection system. Plants would not be required to install a bag leak detection system or COMS for any positive-pressure baghouse with no exhaust stack that was installed before the amendments were proposed. New corrective action requirements for all types of control devices would apply if an operating limit is exceeded.
- The proposed amendments would provide more flexibility by allowing plants to establish operating limits for venturi scrubbers during the initial performance test or any other performance test that meets the emissions limits. The frequency for conducting subsequent performance tests would be reduced from twice each permit term to once each permit term for emissions units equipped with a baghouse.
- The proposed amendments implement a settlement agreement in a lawsuit brought by industry representatives.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS AND COSTS

- The current standards are expected to reduce toxic air emissions from 18 existing plants by about 67 tons per year and PM emissions by about 5,800 tons per year.

- The air toxics reduced include manganese and lead. Exposure to these compounds may cause cancer, central nervous system effects, kidney damage, and acute health disorders such as respiratory and skin irritation. Exposure to PM can aggravate existing respiratory and cardiovascular disease and is associated with increased risk of premature death.
- The proposed amendments would provide additional flexibility to industry and decrease the cost of testing and monitoring. The proposed amendments will not change the level of emissions control provided by the current standards.

BACKGROUND

- The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires EPA to identify categories of industrial sources that emit one or more listed 188 toxic air pollutants.
- EPA's published list of source categories includes integrated iron and steel facilities.
- For major sources within each source category, the CAA requires EPA to develop standards that restrict emissions to levels reflecting the maximum achievable control technology (MACT).
- Major sources are those that emit 10 tons a year or more of a single toxic pollutant or 25 tons a year or more of a combination of air toxics.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To download a copy the proposed amendments, go to EPA's Worldwide Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg> under newly proposed or issued rules.
- For further information about the proposed amendments, contact Mr. Phil Mulrine of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5289 or mulrine.phil@epa.gov.